



Testimony - HB 477, Family Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers - Adult to Child
Ratios - Alterations
Favorable
House Ways & Means Committee
February 5, 2025
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Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairwoman Atterbeary & Members of the House Ways & Means Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents over 23,000 workers across Maryland including family child care providers. Our members have a role in the lives of Marylanders from cradle to career. We wish to express our strong support for Maryland House Bill 477, which proposes changes to the adult-to-child ratios in family child care centers. In the wake of the massive changes the Blueprint for Maryland's Future is slated to have on our education system, it is vital that we ensure our early childhood educators are not left behind.

With the advent of a mixed-delivery system for early childhood education and Pre-K, many family childcare centers stand to lose the children between the ages of 3 and 4 years old currently attending their programs. The safety, well-being, and development of young children are critical to ensuring high-quality child care for Maryland families. Yet, without family child care providers, Maryland's families and economy stand to suffer.

House Bill 477 seeks to address this by changing the current ratio of adults to children under the age of 2. The bill merely allows for one more child under the age of 2 years old in family child care centers. This small adjustment to the ratios will mean the ability of many family child care centers in Maryland able to keep their doors open. While you may hear opposition to this change from many organizations that we consider allies and respect highly, it should be noted that family child care centers going out of business as an unintended consequence of what we all consider good public policy in the Blueprint would be far more devastating to our state.

By adopting this change, we can ensure that children can continue to receive uninterrupted care from family child care centers while making sure small business owners of these centers are not a casualty of good intentions gone wrong.

We ask you all to support HB 477 and thank Delegates Barnes and McCaskill for their leadership on this issue. We urge you to vote yes and provide a favorable report on this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Christopher C. Cano, MPA
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